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WORLD COURT TOLD OF U.S. PLAN TO UNDERMINE NICARAGUA
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A former senior CIA analyst said in testimony before the world court that President Reagan planned to justify U.S. sanctions against Nicaragua by luring Managua's forces into a clash across international borders.

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David C. MacMichael said Friday the scheme approved by Reagan called for the deployment of a special 1,500-man covert force.

"The appreciation at that time was that the Nicaraguan government leadership was possessed ... of a guerrilla mentality," he said. "It was presumed that the Nicaraguan government would engage in hot pursuit across international boundaries in Central America."

The incident was intended to dramatize Washington's claim that Nicaragua was "a menace to the security of the Central American region" and "help justify in U.S. public opinion, actions the U.S. might take against Nicaragua," said MacMichael.

He said the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence proposed he plan for the covert force in December 1981.

In Washington, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Elliott Abrams told reporters he saw reports of MacMichael's testimony and noted the former CIA official said he had no knowledge the alleged plan was implemented.

Asked whether MacMichael is a credible witness, Abrams said: "Not in my view, because the claims he is making are at variance with facts."

The United States has refused to acknowledge the world court's jurisdiction over the Central American conflict and has chosen to ignore the proceedings.

MacMichael, 57, the second witness called in a Nicaraguan suit against the United States, said he worked for the CIA between March 1981 and April 1983 as a senior estimates officer with the analytic group of the agency's national intelligence council. He resumes testimony Monday.

Nicaragua filed the world court suit on April 9, 1984. It charged the United States with "conducting military and paramilitary activities in and against Nicaragua" in violation of international law.

The suit was filed following revelations that the CIA directed the mining of Nicaragua's three main harbors in early 1984 to stop what it said were Nicaraguan shipments of arms to leftist guerrillas fighting El Salvador's government. Nicaragua denied the accusations.

Following a request from Managua, the world court ordered the United States to refrain from attacks against Nicaragua, but Washington replied it would not accept the court's jurisdiction in Central American affairs.